

State: _____ Wisconsin _____

Part I: Attachments

OMB Control Number: 1820-0664

Expiration Date: 10-31-2008

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Attachment 1: Basic Information

Name of Lead Agency:

Wisconsin Department of Health and Family Services (WI DHFS)

Name of Applicable Division and/or Subdivision of Lead Agency:

Division of Disability and Elder Services/Office of Independence and Employment/WisTech

Address of Lead Agency:

1 West Wilson
PO Box 7850
Madison, WI 53707-7850

Name and Title of Certifying Representative for Lead Agency:

Fredi-Ellen Bove
Director, Office of Strategic Finance

Address for Certifying Representative:

1 West Wilson, Room 618
PO Box 7850
Madison, WI 53707-7850

Telephone for Certifying Representative:

(608) 266-2907 Voice
(608) 266-3683 TTY

E-mail for Certifying Representative:

bovefe@dhfs.state.wi.us

Name and Title of Program Director:

Holly Laux O'Higgins
Director, WisTech

Address for Program Director:

1 West Wilson, Room 1151
PO Box 7851
Madison, WI 53707-7851

Telephone for Program Director:

(608) 266-8905 Voice
(608) 267-9880 TTY

E-mail for Program Director:

lauxhm@dhfs.state.wi.us

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Name and Title of Program Contact (if different from Program Director):

Ralph Pelkey
Assistive Technology Specialist
(608) 267-9091 Voice
(608) 267-9880 TTY

Name of Implementing Entity:

None

Name of Applicable Division and/or Subdivision of Implementing Entity:

N/A

Address of Implementing Entity:

N/A

Name and Title of Program Director:

N/A

Address for Program Director:

N/A

Telephone for Program Director:

N/A

E-mail for Program Director:

N/A

Name and Title of Program Contact (if different from Program Director):

N/A

Address for Program Director:

N/A

Telephone for Program Director:

N/A

E-mail for Program Director:

N/A

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Attachment 2: Lead Agency and Implementing Entity

2.1 Identification and Description of the Lead Agency - Identify and describe the Lead Agency referred to in section 4(c)(1)(A) of the AT Act.

2.1A Identification and Description of Lead Agency if an Implementing Entity is not Designated

In 1989, the Wisconsin Department of Health and Family Services (DHFS) was appointed by then-Governor Tommy G. Thompson to act as the Lead Agency for the State of Wisconsin assistive technology (AT) program, WisTech. DHFS will continue to act in this capacity.

Since 1989 the Department has operated WisTech through a series of subcontracts with Wisconsin's independent living centers, AgrAbility of Wisconsin and Disability Rights Wisconsin. Wisconsin's efforts under the Assistive Technology Act of 1998 as amended will expand this network of subcontractors and partners to create a web of AT services available to consumers statewide, operating with the philosophy that there are no wrong doors into the WisTech program.

DHFS is in a unique position to expand the network of AT services and partners through its existing responsibilities and programs. In Wisconsin, DHFS is the state Medicaid and long-term care agency with statutory responsibility to serve and support the health and long-term care needs of frail elders and people with disabilities. DHFS is organizationally composed of units that provide services to persons with blindness and visual loss, deafness and hearing loss, mental illness and substance abuse problems, developmental disabilities and physical disabilities. The Department administers all of Wisconsin's Medicaid and Medicaid waiver programs, as well as residential institutions for people with developmental disabilities and mental illness.

The scope of services provided by the Department, complete with a broad base of partnerships related to assistive technology and long-term care services, provides a framework for WisTech to affect the development of an assistive technology network throughout the state to implement the activities set forth in the three-year State Plan for Assistive Technology.

Staff assigned to WisTech have eight years of combined service and experience administering the state's AT program. In addition, WisTech staff have experience administering the independent living center program, several disability benefit specialist programs, a private nursing home, programs for people with sensory disabilities, and in the field of rural health.

Direct service assistive technology experience will be provided through subcontractor and partner services. These include the AT specialists at the independent living centers and the Community Educational Service Agencies (CESAs), occupational, speech and physical therapists working with the program, and staff who have earned

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certification through the Rehabilitation Engineering Society of North American (RESNA), or have significant direct service experience.

The Department makes its services available regardless of income and at no cost, except for cost share and premiums related to Medicaid. DHFS has also developed the capacity to provide targeted and specialized employment services to its consumer population, services and supports that are collaborative and additive to, yet independent of, the state's vocational rehabilitation system. Generally these services and supports have their origin as part of the nationally recognized Pathways to Independence project which is organizationally integrated with WisTech.

DHFS, as a state Executive Agency and center of the state's long-term care system, is linked administratively and programmatically to the Departments of Public Instruction, Workforce Development (home of Wisconsin's Vocational Rehabilitation program), Commerce and the Public Service Commission. As such, DHFS is strategically positioned to conduct a program addressing the assistive technology needs of people with disabilities in education, employment, telecommunications and community living.

Through ongoing, comprehensive outreach, DHFS programs are available throughout the state to consumers in need. The Department maintains numerous interactive websites that link consumers to programs. The Department also maintains several programs that focus on assisting individual consumers with problems, issues and complaints, including an office dedicated to constituent relations. As a public agency the Department is responsive to constituent inquiries and requests for assistance from the Governor's Office and the offices of members of the Legislature and the Congressional delegation.

The Office of Independence and Employment (OIE), organizational home of WisTech, administers programs that support the missions of the state's array of independent living centers and other community-based services and supports. OIE is also linked to the expanding system of Aging and Disability Resource Centers (ADRC), Wisconsin's "one-stop" centers for long-term care services. Funded in-part through the federal Administration on Aging and the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, Wisconsin's ADRC model emphasizes a single-point of entry into the system for community living and some employment-related services.

The Department's responsiveness to consumers and ability to reach Wisconsin residents statewide through a variety of programs focused on employment education and long-term care provide a basis for the successful operation of WisTech.

The principle of widely available, single-points of entry, with no wrong doors for consumers, is the overarching goal of WisTech. Through expansion of the existing network of AT providers and partners, as well as through developing linkages with existing private and public organizations providing AT services to any person with a

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disability throughout the state, Wisconsin will pull together a comprehensive web of AT services available to consumers.

The WisTech program will be administered through a network of subcontractors and partners to insure statewide coverage while respecting the consumer's preferred point of entry into the program. During Year One, Wisconsin will establish contracts with its independent living centers, the Wheelchair Recycling Program and the University of Wisconsin's Stout Vocational Rehabilitation Institute. During Years Two and Three, Wisconsin will seek to increase the number of contractors, and expand and broaden Year One contracts to include other elements of State Level Activities (such as Device Demonstration and Device Reutilization). These will primarily address the Community Living goals outlined in Attachment 4.

The Department will seek to establish Memoranda of Agreement (MOAs) with the State Departments of Public Instruction and Workforce Development, and the Public Service Commission, in line with the education, employment and telecommunications goals outlined in Attachment 4. DHFS will also seek to establish agreements with the following public and private entities to address the State Level Activities of Device Demonstration and Device Reutilization: the Wheelchair Recycling Program, Easter Seals/AgrAbility of Wisconsin, the University of Wisconsin Communication Aids and Services Clinic, and the Wisconsin Assistive Technology Initiative. These initiatives are described more fully in Attachment 5.

2.1B Identification and Description of the Lead Agency if an Implementing Entity is Designated

Not applicable.

2.2 Identification and Description of the Implementing Entity – Identify and describe the Implementing Entity referred to in section 4(c)(1)(B) of the AT Act, if such an Implementing Entity is designated by the Governor.

Not applicable.

2.3 Show of Good Cause for Change in Lead Agency or Implementing Entity – If the Governor has chosen to change the Lead Agency or, if applicable, Implementing Entity as allowed in section 4(c)(1)(C) of the AT Act, provide an explanation of good cause for this redesignation.

Not applicable.

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Attachment 3: State Advisory Council

3.1 Membership of the Advisory Council - Identify the members of the Advisory Council and each member's designation as an individual with disabilities who uses AT, a family member or guardian of such individual, or a representative of a State agency or other entity.

The membership of Wisconsin Assistive Technology Advisory Council (AT Council) is comprised of four members from organizations mandated in the Act, as well as six consumer members. Below is a listing of the members and their affiliation:

Member Name	Officer	Term Length/ End Date	
Bob White		2 years/ August 2007	Wisconsin Division of Vocational Rehabilitation
Brent Odell		2 years/ August 2007	Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction
To Be Named			Wisconsin Council on Workforce Investment
John Nousaine	Chairperson	2 years/ August 2007	Wisconsin's Independent Living Centers
Bill Ager		2 years/ August 2007	Consumer representative
Kevin Ammons	Member At-Large	3 years/ August 2008	Consumer representative
Betsy Gruba		3 years/ August 2008	Consumer representative
Noah Hershkowitz	Vice Chairperson	3 years/ August 2008	Consumer representative
Meg Steimle		2 years/ August 2007	Parent representative
Jackie Wells		2 years/ August 2007	Consumer representative
Holly Laux O'Higgins			WisTech Director
Ralph Pelkey			WisTech AT Specialist

The Council is staffed by the WisTech Director and the WisTech AT Specialist.

3.2 Structure and Operation of the Advisory Council – Describe the structure and operations of the Advisory Council.

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The Wisconsin AT Council will provide consumer-directed advice to DHFS on the operation and implementation of WisTech. Representatives with disabilities from agencies mandated in the AT Act are not counted as consumers for the purpose of establishing a majority of consumers who use AT on the Council.

The composition and bylaws of the Wisconsin AT Council were developed by a subcommittee of a consumer body appointed by Wisconsin's Governor-appointed Council on Physical Disabilities. Through their goals for long-term support, the Governor-appointed Council made a public commitment to the inclusion of assistive technology to increase independence for people with physical disabilities in the state.

The subcommittee, which included the permanent AT Council members from Wisconsin's educational and vocational rehabilitation agencies, also created membership criteria for consumers, developed a recruitment plan for consumers and selected consumers through a blind-scoring process. Solicitation for consumer members was accomplished through a letter and flyer which were mailed to disability organizations, independent living centers, county agencies, tribes and other relevant organizations. The letter and flyer were also posted online at the WisTech website.

Initial recruitment efforts drew 23 candidates from all over the state, with a concentration of candidates from the Milwaukee and Madison metropolitan areas. WisTech staff used aggregate scores from the AT Committee as well as disability, age and geographic diversity to select candidates. Many of the members of the AT Council are drawn from the metropolitan areas of the state based on their high scores, experience with AT and overall qualifications. Future membership recruitment efforts will center on pulling consumers from the northern part of the state, as well as from diverse ethnic and racial groups.

Recruitment for the initial Council has concluded, but consumers have been assured that recruitment is ongoing and are encouraged to provide application materials to WisTech in anticipation of future vacancies. An active recruitment effort began July 2006 using the same methodology and requirements as the previous recruitment. The only exception is that candidates are required to submit a resume or vitae.

Currently, the Council only has a membership of ten. Based on future needs of the Council, the bylaws allow for additional members on the permanent Council up to a limit of 13 members. This is a cost-saving measure and to ensure that representation on the Council does not become so broad that the number of members and consumers would create time- and attention-consuming logistical challenges. Members from the community and representatives of organizations that should appropriately provide input on assistive technology programs and policy in the state (e.g., Medical Assistance, vendors, disability-specific organizations) will be incorporated into the Council through active subcommittee membership. This will also facilitate the participation of private industry by respecting the time constraints of many vendors and private industry representatives. The bylaws of the Council dictate that each subcommittee must

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incorporate at least two non-members to facilitate the inclusion of other community interests not represented on the Council.

The structure of the Council allows for staggered terms of two to three years, of which members can serve two terms. The assignment of initial term length was determined through a random process (see the chart at the beginning of Attachment 3). All members are subject to term limits, including representatives from mandated organizations. All Council decisions are made by majority vote. Staff to the Council are not voting members.

Council leadership consists of the following member-elected officers: Chairperson, Vice Chairperson, and Member At-Large. The Council is led through a cooperative relationship between the WisTech Director and the Council Chairperson. Meetings are held quarterly, and members who are not able to attend quarterly meetings in person will be included via teleconference or videoconference. All materials that members are expected to review will be provided in advance of meetings through a combination of email and regular mail, based on the member's preference.

Staff to the Council will be responsible for setting up meetings and appropriate accommodations, distributing materials, organizing recruitment efforts, sharing data, information and updates with the Council and taking minutes, dissemination of meeting and Council activities and retention of records.

The Council will provide advice on the State Plan and State Plan amendment through meetings and communication with WisTech staff. Subcommittees will be convened to address specific goals, review implementation progress, State Level and State Leadership activities, and amendments to the plan.

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Attachment 4: Measurable Goals

WisTech will establish a baseline for each of the goals 4.1 through 4.7 during year one, and will submit after year one an amendment identifying the long-term goal and short-term goals set to improve upon this baseline during years two and three of the State Plan. This baseline will be established by using a data collection instrument and procedures to be determined by RSA after the State plan process has been completed.

4.1 Goal for Improving Access to AT in Education (includes individuals who receive services under the Individuals with Disabilities Improvement Act (20 U.S.C. 1400 et seq.) and section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 U.S.C. 720 et seq.) and individuals in institutions of higher education and vocational education, including community colleges).

- Long-term goal:
 - Short-term goal for Year 3:
 - Short-term goal for Year 2: Establish baseline of the percent of appropriate targeted individuals and entities who accessed device demonstration programs and/or device loan programs and made a decision about an AT device or service for educational purposes as a result of the assistance they received.
 - Short-term goal for Year 1: N/A data collection not established

4.2 Goal for Improving Access to AT in Employment (includes individuals who receive services under the Wisconsin vocational rehabilitation program carried out under Title I of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 U.S.C. 720 et seq.)).

- Long-term goal:
 - Short-term goal for Year 3:
 - Short-term goal for Year 2: Establish baseline of the percent of appropriate targeted individuals and entities who accessed device demonstration programs and/or device loan programs and made a decision about an AT device or service for employment purposes as a result of the assistance they received.
 - Short-term goal for Year 1: N/A data collection not established

4.3 Goal for Improving Access to AT in Community Living

- Long-term goal:

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- Short-term goal for Year 3:
- Short-term goal for Year 2: Establish baseline of the percent of appropriate targeted individuals and entities who accessed device demonstration programs and/or device loan programs and made a decision about an AT device or service for community living as a result of the assistance they received.
- Short-term goal for Year 1: N/A data collection not established

4.4 Goal for Improving Access to IT and Telecommunications

- Long-term goal:
 - Short-term goal for Year 3:
 - Short-term goal for Year 2: Establish baseline of the percent of appropriate targeted individuals and entities who accessed device demonstration programs and/or device loan programs and made a decision about an AT device or service that meets an IT/telecommunications need as a result of the assistance they received.
 - Short-term goal for Year 1: N/A data collection not established

4.5 Goal for Improving Acquisition of AT in Education (includes individuals who receive services under the Individuals with Disabilities Improvement Act (20 U.S.C. 1400 et seq.) and section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 U.S.C. 720 et seq.) and individuals in institutions of higher education and vocational education, including community colleges).

- Long-term goal:
 - Short-term goal for Year 3:
 - Short-term goal for Year 2: Establish baseline of the percentage of appropriate targeted individuals and entities who obtained devices or services from State financing activities or reutilization programs for educational purposes who would not have obtained the AT device or service.
 - Short-term goal for Year 1: N/A data collection not established

4.6 Goal for Improving Acquisition of AT in Employment (includes individuals who receive services under the Wisconsin vocational rehabilitation program carried out under Title I of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 U.S.C. 720 et seq.)).

- Long-term goal:

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- Short-term goal for Year 3:
- Short-term goal for Year 2: Establish baseline of the percentage of appropriate targeted individuals and entities who obtained devices or services from State financing activities or reutilization programs for employment purposes who would not have obtained the AT device or service.
- Short-term goal for Year 1: N/A data collection not established

4.7 Goal for Improving Acquisition of AT in Community Living

- Long-term goal:
 - Short-term goal for Year 3
 - Short-term goal for Year 2: Establish baseline of the percentage of appropriate targeted individuals and entities who obtained devices or services from State financing activities or reutilization programs for community living purposes who would not have obtained the AT device or service.
 - Short-term goal for Year 1: N/A data collection not established

4.8 Additional Measurable Goals -- If applicable, describe any measurable goals that the State has set in addition to the goals established in items 4.1 through 4.7 for addressing the assistive technology needs of individuals with disabilities in the State related to education, employment, community living, and telecommunications and information technology.

Wisconsin will establish other goals as appropriate in Year Three, after reviewing baselines to access and acquisition of AT devices and services.

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Attachment 5: State-level Activities

5.1 State Financing Activities – Describe how the State will implement State financing activities as described in section 4(e)(2)(A) of the AT Act.

Wisconsin is claiming comparability on its existing alternative financing program, WisLoan. See Attachment 6 for details regarding Wisconsin's claim for comparability.

5.2 Device Reutilization Program – Describe how the State will implement a device reutilization program as described in section 4(e)(2)(B) of the Act.

Wisconsin will provide statewide leadership for existing agencies and programs that are already engaged in equipment reutilization activities. State leadership will improve the viability of existing programs and will improve consumer access and acquisition of AT. Consumers will be more aware that various types of recycled equipment are available at a lower cost. Consumers will experience less pressure to buy and will be able to explore various options for equipment that would not be possible by working with a retail dealer or through a public or private insurance carrier. Consumer acquisition of AT devices will also be improved because more people in need will be able to obtain equipment at a lowered cost, making it possible for consumers to obtain equipment that may otherwise be unavailable due to lack of health plan eligibility or prohibitive costs.

Under this AT plan, all of Wisconsin's efforts in the program area of Device Reutilization will be publicized and coordinated so that organizations, groups, businesses and providers that impact this consumer base are made aware of the availability of services. WisTech will not directly operate a reutilization program but will actively work to coordinate existing statewide device reutilization programs. In this way, consumers will have many avenues in which to enter the system to access recycled devices. In like manner, public information will be developed to encourage businesses and individuals to turn in equipment for re-use.

The largest reutilization program in the state, the Wheelchair Recycling Program (WRP) began in 1988 in Madison as an effort to collect and distribute used durable medical equipment (DME). The program received funding from the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) as an incentive to keep equipment from ending up in landfills. In 2002, DNR funding ended, and the WRP entered into a partnership with *IndependenceFirst*, one of Wisconsin's independent living centers.

WRP can serve as a model in the state in terms of their established services of collecting equipment, arranging for repair and refurbishment, and redistribution. Equipment is cleaned and repaired through a work program with a Department of Corrections facility. Employees and volunteers are trained on the job and develop a skilled procedure for cleaning and repairing DME equipment. WRP engages a large number of volunteers from a group of retirees to work on equipment. The equipment inventory has been cataloged on a website for easy reference. WRP has adopted a pricing system in which the cost to consumers averages 70 percent less than new equipment. Collection and resale of

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equipment is enhanced by agreements with each of the state's eight independent living centers, expanding the scope of the program to include all 72 counties and Wisconsin's tribal nations.

There are several other agencies in the state that operate services for the recycling of wheelchairs and durable medical equipment. Local Easter Seals offices, churches, Lions Clubs, Paralyzed Veterans, and others conduct collection drives and redistribute equipment in various local areas around the state. The statewide Lions Clubs operate collection sites and recycling campaigns for hearing aids and eyeglasses. The products that are collected are returned to manufacturers in exchange for rebates and discounts for the Lions eyeglass and hearing aids distribution programs.

IndependenceFirst has implemented a program of recycling used computers. Computers are donated by individuals and businesses to be refurbished and refitted with modifications to meet the needs of persons with disabilities. Computers, often with adaptive accessibility features, are then made available at a nominal cost to persons with disabilities. A grant from the Wisconsin Public Service Commission covers the cost of consumers' internet services for one year.

The Wisconsin Department of Corrections operates a computer recycling program through their prison industry program (Badger State Industries). This program also began under a DNR grant to dispose of computer electronics in a way that keeps the equipment out of landfills and recycles the equipment back to consumers. Non-profit and government agencies, schools and individuals donate their equipment which is refurbished and returned to non-profit agencies including programs that work with individuals with disabilities. Computers are also distributed to persons with disabilities who are involved in education or training programs.

The Wisconsin Assistive Technology Initiative (WATI) operates a Used Equipment Marketplace. This is a free service of anyone who would like to sell or give away any assistive device. Available devices are listed on the WATI website and published in *The Monitor*, a free newsletter published by WATI and Milwaukee Public Schools. WATI provides the selling party's contact information to anyone interested in obtaining one of the devices listed. WATI is also a partner of the National Cristina Foundation, helping to locally place donated computers with persons with disabilities, or agencies who work with this population.

The above services and agencies form the foundation of Wisconsin's Device Reutilization Program. This effort makes good business and social service sense as well as providing an environmentally friendly alternative to preventing large amounts of manufactured goods from ending up in landfills. It is good business to make use of items that are readily available and good social policy to enable consumers to obtain AT that they need but would otherwise be unable to obtain due to the high cost and/or lack of coverage under their health plans. Environmental benefits are reaped by preventing tons of medical, computer, and other equipment from ending up in landfill sites.

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Year One

During the first year of the Plan, WisTech improved the visibility and the public's awareness of Wisconsin's equipment reutilization programs. Through the use of websites, presentations, printed materials, and information and referrals, WisTech increased and improved the public perception of this cost effective and valuable AT resource.

- WisTech took over the operation of the Wisconsin Medicaid website that provides contact information for programs and agencies collecting and redistributing used equipment.
- WisTech contracted with the Wheelchair Recycling Program to help underwrite the costs of operating this program including further computer cataloging of their inventory, transporting equipment within the state, and overhead expenses. WisTech built expertise in the WRP administration by sending the WRP director to the national equipment reutilization conference in Georgia.
- WisTech studied the feasibility of providing a web-based listing of equipment for sale by researching the operation of similar programs in other states. Equipment listings matching consumers selling equipment with consumers needing equipment operate locally and are facilitated by the ILCs, county agencies and other organizations through websites, email listservs and newsletters.

WisTech did not feel this was appropriate for statewide implementation due to the potential conflict of interest with WisTech's goal of supporting the Wheelchair Recycling Program. It was determined that programs such as this undermined the efforts of WRP to appropriately match people with clean, operational equipment. Additionally, the shortage of staffing at the systems-level for implementation and maintenance made this project untenable.

Year Two

- WisTech will collect information about all agencies and programs in the state that are engaged in equipment reutilization. Included in this inventory will be information about the populations and regions served, how equipment is refurbished, and whether fees are charged for supplying refurbished equipment.
- WisTech will update and administer the former Medicaid equipment reutilization website and will expand and update the information on a regular basis to include additional programs administered by partner agencies and including computer and hearing aid recycling.
- WisTech will organize and conduct a symposium to learn the specific experiences, activities, and operations of each agency and entity that is engaged in equipment reutilization. All of the known reutilization agencies and programs will be invited to participate in this event. Panelists will identify issues of common interest and focus on methods of cooperation and information sharing to improve consumer services.

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The symposium is part of a collaborative training and education event scheduled for March 22 and 23, 2007. The event is co-sponsored by WisTech and WATI.

- WRP will share what they have learned about cleaning, inventory, and repair of equipment with other local, disability-specific recycling projects. This will involve presentations, technical assistance, or demonstrations at future device demonstration events as described in 5.4. This will be facilitated in-part by participation in the symposium described earlier and other state leadership training activities.

Year Three

- WisTech will study the feasibility of improving communications and referrals to increase the amount of equipment being recovered and recycled in the state and increase the number of consumers served. The identification of strategies will be a follow-up of the symposium held in Year Two.
- WisTech will explore the initiation of system-level change regarding DME budget expenditures by Wisconsin Medicaid. This may involve establishing a pilot project for supplying refurbished equipment under specific Medicaid HMO plans or Medicaid Waiver plans to determine the extent of cost savings and customer satisfaction.

Ongoing

- WisTech distributes information and conducts outreach activities to groups that reach various consumer constituencies, including: parents of children with disabilities, aging groups, persons with sensory impairments, consumers with mental health issues, people with physical disabilities, underserved populations including minorities, low income persons, and tribal members. These efforts help consumers who access the system through numerous avenues including the health care system, county social service agencies, disability specific programs, independent living centers, long-term care settings, educational programs, and vocational rehabilitation.
- WisTech is working cooperatively with SVRI and the Medicaid Infrastructure Grant project to implement the Training and Technical Assistance (AT T&TA) website and toll-free number that will draw together in a single location AT resources across the state. This will improve information and referral for all State Level activities.

5.3 Device Loan Program – Describe how the State will implement a device loan program as described in section 4(e)(2)(C) of the Act.

Funded under earlier versions of the AT Act, WisTech operated a number of loan centers through Wisconsin's independent living centers. Each ILC developed its own method of operating its loan center based on agency philosophy, staffing, expertise and other regional resources. For example, some ILCs have RESNA-certified technicians on staff, while in other parts of the state it is difficult to find staff with those qualifications. This skews the kind of information available to consumers and the equipment and devices provided by the loan center. The result is the existence of a wide variety of loan centers

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that operate without centralization or statewide consistency. Additional loan centers are also being operated through localized programs and organizations such as Easter Seals of Wisconsin and independent pharmacies.

Years One and Two

During Year One, Wisconsin used contracts to narrow the scope of ILC AT activities to focus on the development of coordinated loan centers. Revisiting this action halfway through the year resulted in the realization that many ILCs are not able to operate a loan program without acting first as an equipment demonstration center.

In the remainder of Year One, and throughout Year Two, WisTech continues to address the overarching goal of developing an equipment loan program which will operate with the philosophy of a single point of entry, with public access to loan center inventory and lending practices. Development of coordinated loan centers will include:

- The creation of a standard equipment inventory by a qualified SVRI staff person.

WisTech contracted with the University of Wisconsin's Stout Vocational Rehabilitation Institute (SVRI) for staff time to create the standard equipment inventory. The creation of a standard inventory incorporates the participation of ILC staff who have worked with their regional loan centers because of their specialized understanding of the needs of their population and their experience operating a regional loan and demonstration center.

Following the creation of a standard equipment inventory, each loan center inventory will be evaluated and appropriate equipment purchases will be made. The development of a standard inventory at each regional loan center will insure that consumers will be able to access the same equipment regardless of where they live in the state.

This effort, started in Year One, will continue into Year Two as the logistics of working with multiple agencies involves a substantial time commitment.

Housing the loan centers at the ILCs makes good use of the existing resources developed through WisTech since 1990 and builds on the reputation the ILCs have made as loan centers for AT devices. In addition, this relationship with WisTech will facilitate the ILCs meeting the mandate to provide services to people of all ages with all disabilities, a requirement with it's foundation in their receipt of state and federal funding.

Year Two Only

- The development of a web-based inventory of all loan/demonstration centers.

The effort will follow the completion of the development of a standard equipment loan program inventory.

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In addition to the standard inventory of equipment, each ILC will continue to house equipment purchased and maintained during their earlier tenure as a loan center. This equipment, if it was purchased with federal AT funds, will also be included in the inventory. The ILCs will be encouraged to incorporate into the larger inventory all of the AT devices that have been purchased with a variety of funding sources including state telecommunications grants from the Public Service Commission. The ILCs will have the option of including the equipment purchased with other funds as part of the larger inventory of equipment.

A web-based inventory will allow any person in the state to access a list of the equipment available for loan or demonstration through WisTech. Consumers will also have the option of learning about available equipment by phoning their local ILC or the WisTech toll free phone line. Paper copies will be made available upon request.

- The development of a standard check-out, maintenance and cleaning protocol for all loan centers.

WisTech is using the committees of the AT Advisory Council to work with existing Tech Act programs and existing loan programs in the state to evaluate protocols and procedures for equipment check out, duration of check out, maintenance and cleaning so a standard can be developed for Wisconsin loan centers. This will also involve standard lending agreements with other loan centers (e.g., Easter Seals, the Wisconsin Assistive Technology Initiative serving children birth to grade 12) and with county agencies working with people with disabilities (e.g., the Aging and Disability Resource Centers).

- The inclusion of additional loan/demonstration centers into the larger network of ILC loan/demonstration centers.

WisTech will work to establish a partnership with the loan centers operated by other agencies and organizations. Because some loan centers provide services to only a limited population (e.g., children receiving schooling and services through Wisconsin public education system), developing a network of loan centers that provide services to a variety of populations will demonstrate the wide variety of options available to consumers as they go through transitions in their life, be it from school to work, or from an institution to community living.

Some of the organizations with which WisTech will seek partnerships for loan center services include the Badger Association of the Blind, Easter Seals of Wisconsin, United Cerebral Palsy, and Wisconsin's Aging and Disability Resource Centers.

Year Three

- The development of a transportation system for shipping equipment around the state.

Because Wisconsin is a largely rural state with large regional service areas, the development of an equipment transportation system is critical to the success of the

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loan centers, if they are to operate cooperative. This effort needs additional research and discussion with partners who are resistant to the idea of shipping expensive and one-of-a-kind equipment around the state, especially when funding for replacing and repairing equipment is limited.

Additional research will be conducted once loan program protocol, inventory and web-based access are established. At that time, WisTech will work with the state library system, the state interdepartmental mail system, and other existing systems to explore the feasibility of transporting AT across the state.

- The web-based system will also include a subsystem for reserving equipment. Requests processed through the web will be forwarded to the regionally-appropriate ILC loan center through the website.

Ongoing

- WisTech works with partners and contractors to develop a consistent method in which consumers from across the state are referred to the network of AT services and devices, which operate as part of the other State Level Activities.

The online Training and Technical Assistance (AT T&TA) and toll-free number under development through partnership with SVRI and MIG funding will address this effort.

- WisTech distributes information and conducts outreach activities to groups that reach various consumer constituencies, including: parents of children with disabilities, aging groups, persons with sensory impairments, consumers with mental health issues, people with physical disabilities, underserved populations including minorities, low income persons, and tribal members. These efforts help consumers who access the system through numerous avenues including the health care system, county social service agencies, disability specific programs, independent living centers, long-term care settings, educational programs, and vocational rehabilitation.
- Evaluation of program operation and addition of loan centers throughout the state in an ongoing effort to increase the statewide nature of the program.
- Update and evaluate inventory needs based on demand from consumers. Adjustment of inventory to accommodate changes.
- Partnership development and inclusion into the greater network of partners providing loan center services.

5.4 Device Demonstration Program – Describe how the State will implement a device demonstration program as described in section 4(e)(2)(D) of the Act.

A Device Demonstration program is one at which consumers can receive advice as to what equipment is appropriate to their assistive technology needs and view a wide variety

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of equipment available through different vendors and manufacturers, with knowledge of up-front and ongoing maintenance costs.

Consumers can access demonstration centers through: home visits, visits to the site of a demonstration center, an employment-based assistive technology workplace accommodations, an Individualized Educational Plan (IEP), and at a technology fair or symposium.

Year One

- Work with the Stout Vocational Rehabilitation Institute (SVRI), the Wisconsin Assistive Technology Initiative (WATI), the Communication Aids and Support (CASC) and the Communication Development Program (CDP) to establish and build the relationship with their demonstration centers and the populations they serve.

SVRI operates a demonstration center that focuses primarily on consumers' AT needs as they return to employment. SVRI is accredited through the Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities (CARF).

WATI operates a central demonstration center for use by public school employees across the state who seek to check out equipment for students who need AT. Each Cooperative Educational Service Agency (CESA) also operates their own loan center through which equipment is available to public school employees.

The CASC and CDP at the University of Wisconsin Waisman Center operate a loan closet for participants in their program. Their inventory primarily focuses on augmentative and alternative communication and computer access technologies.

The Independent Living Centers (ILCs) operate demonstration programs in conjunction with their efforts surrounding the equipment loan programs. Experience over the past decade has taught the ILCs that appropriate and successful equipment loans are directly related to the consumers' access to a number of pieces of equipment before choosing one.

- Year One will see the beginning of relationship development with vendors in order to compile a directory in Wisconsin that will be made available on the WisTech Training and Technical Assistance website.
- WisTech will create a definition of a Demonstration Center.

In addition to the criteria set forth in the AT Act, the definition will include criteria such as qualification of staff and national or regional recognition of AT demonstration expertise. A committee of the AT Council is working on defining qualifications for demonstration center staff that lack professional credentials but have significant relevant work experience.

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One certification explored by the committee is the Assistive Technology Practitioner (ATP) certification administered by the Rehabilitation Engineering Society of North America's (RESNA). ATP certification provides a standard level of AT knowledge and skill for practitioners demonstrating equipment. The ATP certification is nationally recognized by Medicare.

WisTech seeks to increase the number of RESNA-certified ATPs in Wisconsin. WisTech provided tuition grants and distributed information about a university study class for ATP certification and is exploring opportunities for organizing study groups for ATP certification with WATI.

Year Two

- Relationships will be explored with additional partners operating demonstration centers, including the independent living centers and their demonstration of telecommunications equipment funded through the Public Service Commission.
- Work with WATI, SVRI, CASC-CDP and the ILCs, to develop statewide demonstration activities. Some upcoming events include:
 - SVRI is partnering with WisTech and the Medicaid Infrastructure Grant (MIG) to present a Tech Expo that highlights equipment and hands on experience in September 2006.
 - Organized in conjunction with CASC, a demonstration/training event is scheduled for Spring 2007 focusing on Alternative and Augmentative Communication Devices.
 - In March 2007, a demonstration event will be conducted as part of a larger training event coordinated in conjunction with WATI. Equipment to be demonstrated includes vehicle modifications and a variety of AT that is appropriate in the classroom and at home.

In 2007 WisTech, in partnership with SVRI, will coordinate a series of four demonstration activities, to be presented at regional locations throughout the state. Demonstration activities will vary with some having a focus on a specific type of assistive technology device (e.g., augmentative and assistive communication devices), a specific audience (e.g., school and transition age youth, employment), and broad-focused demonstration events that will highlight a wide variety of AT devices and services. The events will incorporate content that encourages vendors to emphasize the importance of meeting consumer needs rather than selling particular devices. The demonstration activities will provide greater visibility and attendance at events that are already being held by professional organizations, university programs, vendors, tribal units, veterans groups, vocational rehabilitation, ILCs, and others.

These demonstration activities would function as a conference and be targeted to consumers, professionals, advocates, vendors and providers – to all parties interested in the field of assistive technology. They will serve to expand the information and networking base for programs, agencies, and consumers who are in need of accurate information about assistive technology.

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Year Three

- Following the development of criteria defining Demonstration Centers, WisTech will seek partnerships for demonstration center services with the Badger Association of the Blind, Easter Seals of Wisconsin, United Cerebral Palsy, Wisconsin's Aging and Disability Resource Centers and others.

Ongoing

- WisTech works with partners and contractors to develop a consistent method in which consumers from across the state are referred to the network of AT services and devices, which operate as part of the other State Level Activities.

The online Training and Technical Assistance (AT T&TA) and toll-free number under development through partnership with SVRI and MIG funding will address this effort.

- WisTech distributes information and conducts outreach activities to groups that reach various consumer constituencies, including: parents of children with disabilities, aging groups, persons with sensory impairments, consumers with mental health issues, people with physical disabilities, underserved populations including minorities, low income persons, and tribal members. These efforts help consumers who access the system through numerous avenues including the health care system, county social service agencies, disability specific programs, independent living centers, long-term care settings, educational programs, and vocational rehabilitation.
- Evaluate the success of the demonstration events and determine if additional events would be appropriate and effective.
- Expand the number and scope of demonstration centers through the inclusion of additional partners.
- Continue to gather and update vendor information to include on the WisTech website and to maintain vendor contacts for future regional demonstration activities.
- Evaluate the effectiveness of the referrals and network communication between the demonstration centers, reutilization centers and loan centers.

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Attachment 6: Comparable Support

6.1 Source and Amount of Support – Identify the State-level activity for which there is comparable support, the source of this support, the amount of the support, and the project year for which this support is being provided.

The Wisconsin Department of Health and Family Services (DHFS) operates an Alternative Financing Program, WisLoan, to assist consumers in the purchase of Assistive Technology (AT). The WisLoan Program was funded under Title III of the Assistive Technology Act (AT Act) of 1998. This program received federal grant dollars in 2001, 2003, and in 2006. *IndependenceFirst*, a community-based and consumer-controlled organization, provided the 25 percent cash match required under the federal Request for Proposal. The amount of match was \$250,000 in 2001, \$762,588 in 2003, and \$250,000 in 2006. *IndependenceFirst* manages WisLoan and subcontracts with Wisconsin's independent living centers (ILCs) to provide statewide consumer access to the program.

Application for WisLoan is open to people with disabilities who are residents of Wisconsin and who seek to purchase assistive technology. There are no income requirements or requirements to exhaust personal or public funding opportunities before pursuing a loan through the program. Individuals are given the opportunity to have an AT assessment and training on the AT they will purchase. Since the inception of the program in 2001 until June 30, 2006, WisLoan has processed 572 applications, and approved 385 loans for AT. Under the program, WisLoan has loaned \$2.5 million with a default rate of 2.85%.

The DHFS Bureau of Aging and Disability Resources (BADR) provides program and fiscal oversight. The banking partner, Marshall and Ilsley Bank (M&I) provides a 5-to-1 guarantee leverage on the cash loss reserve, which was set aside as guaranty funds for loans made through the program. The current interest rate is 5% for all loans. All loans are guaranteed and all lending decisions are the responsibility of the WisLoan Board. *IndependenceFirst*, manages the program and subcontracts with the network of state independent living centers to ensure that the program is offered state wide.

In accordance with AFP guidelines, the grant money and local match are maintained in a permanent and separate bank account. Interest and earnings on low risk investments from that account are intended to support the operational expenses of WisLoan in current and future years. In this way, the proceeds from the permanent and separate account are intended to allow the program to remain in operation in perpetuity.

The DHFS is the program grantee and administers the contract and provides programmatic and fiscal oversight.

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6.2 Comparability -- Demonstrate that this support is comparable in terms of funding and that the activities are comparable in terms of scope.

The operating budget for WisLoan is currently \$205,000 annually. This amount exceeds the amount that would be available if the program were to operate out of the available funding for the AT Act of 1998 – as Amended.

Since the inception of WisLoan, and up until June 30, 2006, 572 applications have been processed with 385 loans for AT approved and 301 loans made. Applicants include persons from all areas of the state, all ages and ethnic groups. Equipment, vehicle and home modifications that are funded with WisLoan have improved the lives of persons with disabilities and their families in the domains of education, employment, telecommunication and community living.

6.3 Coordination and Collaboration – Describe how the State will coordinate activities and collaborate with the appropriate entity, if the comparable funds are provided to, or the activities are conducted by, an entity other than the Lead Agency or Implementing Entity.

The activities of Wisconsin's Alternative Financing Program, WisLoan, are conducted by the state (DHFS) under a contract arrangement with a community-based organization (CBO). The CBO in turn subcontracts with the statewide network of independent living centers to assure that the program is offered statewide and in a uniform manner.

WisLoan and WisTech are administered by the same staff at the Wisconsin DHFS. WisLoan was developed to be an integral part of the AT services offered through the ILCs under the AT Act of 1998. The ILCs continue to be the primary partners for implementing WisLoan statewide.

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Attachment 7: State Flexibility

7.1 Activity – Identify each State-level activity the State is choosing not to carry out.

Wisconsin is choosing to carry out all four State-level activities.

7.2 Maintenance of Statewideness and Comprehensiveness – Demonstrate that the Statewide AT Program will continue to be comprehensive without conducting this activity.

Not applicable.

7.3 Achievement of Measurable Goals - Demonstrate that the State can reach its measurable education goals, employment goals, telecommunications and information technology goals, and community living goals without conducting such activities.

Not applicable.

7.4 Coordination and Collaboration – Describe how the Lead Agency or Implementing Entity will coordinate activities and collaborate with entities in the State that do conduct this activity, if the State chooses not to conduct this activity because another entity already conducts it.

Not applicable.

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Attachment 8: State Leadership Activities

8.1 Training and Technical Assistance Activities – Describe how the State will provide training and technical assistance to enhance the knowledge, skills, and competencies of individuals from local settings statewide, including representatives of State and local educational agencies, other State and local agencies, early intervention programs, adult service programs, hospitals and other health care facilities, institutions of higher education and businesses as described in section 4(e)(3)(B)(i) of the AT Act.

Training

The Wisconsin Department of Health and Family Services will contract for staff time with the University of Wisconsin-Stout, Stout Vocational Rehabilitation Institute (SVRI) for the provision of training and technical assistance statewide to specified target groups including staff members at ILCs, ADRCs, county social service departments, and rehabilitation professionals including professionals at disability-specific agencies.

Training specific to the following core areas will be provided on a regional basis over the next three years.

1. Increasing general awareness of the benefits of assistive technology
2. Accessing, using and funding assistive technology
3. Increasing practitioner skill level and capacity in assessing the need for assistive technology and services

Customized training will be available on request and will be organized with the collaboration of WisTech partners. Training made available through WisTech will be provided at no cost to consumers, and whenever possible, at no cost to participants.

All participants will have the opportunity to earn continuing education credits (CEUs) at trainings. WisTech will work with professional organizations to ensure that WisTech training CEUs are approved. This includes organizations supporting social workers, certified rehabilitation counselors, vocational rehabilitation counselors, physical and occupational therapists, speech-language pathologists, and others.

Over the next three years WisTech, in cooperation with SVRI, will engage in a number of training activities. WisTech has developed a training schedule of twice-a-year, two-day events for ILC staff, vocational rehabilitation, and ADRC staff. These events have featured speakers representing specific AT related to specific disabilities including mobility impairments, deaf and hard of hearing, blind and visual impairments, and technology specific topics. With the collaboration of SVRI, future training events will be expanded to include the following partners and content.

WisTech will partner with WATI to increase the number of individuals with assistive technology professional qualification through the development and operation of a ATP certification through the Rehabilitation Engineering Society of North America (RESNA).

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In Year One, WisTech facilitated the enrollment of 10 individuals to take a RESNA Study Group class at the University of Wisconsin-Stout by making tuition grants with funding provided by the state in excess of the \$25,000 budgeted to WisTech.

Education

- Early Intervention, Childhood Education and Youth in Transition.

Training will be provided to special and regular education teachers, school physical therapists, school occupational therapists and school speech-language therapists in their local communities. The focus will be on the three core areas identified above as well as on how to integrate assistive technology into the classroom and other pre-school and school-related activities, including involvement in the Wisconsin Children's Long-term Care Redesign.

WisTech will assist with planning for the Youth Leadership Forum hosted each summer at the University of Wisconsin-Whitewater to prepare students with disabilities who are moving from high school to the university setting.

Wisconsin's Department of Public Instruction oversees 426 individual school districts statewide and provides support to 12 regional Cooperative Educational Service Agencies (CESAs), which are independent, not-for-profit organizations. CESAs were created to serve educational needs in all areas of Wisconsin by serving as a link both between school districts and between school districts and the State.

Each of the 12 CESAs employs a part-time Assistive Technology Consultant through funding from the Wisconsin Assistive Technology Initiative (WATI). The AT Consultants work with teachers and public school staff to address the individual AT needs of students in their member school districts.

WisTech collaborates with WATI by attending statewide meetings of the AT Consultants. This activity helps to identify the training needs of teachers, therapists and others working in the school system and in the Birth to 3 program. WisTech and WATI work cooperatively to plan, coordinate, and present at training events.

During Years Two and Three, WisTech will contact school districts that have chosen not to be CESA members to work out agreements for sharing information and joint participation in training events.

- Higher Education

SVRI will take the lead in coordinating with the Student Disability Services offices located at the 16 campuses of the Wisconsin Technical College System, the 13 two- and 13 four-year campuses in the University of Wisconsin system as well as the two Native American colleges.

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WATI will work with colleges and universities that have teacher and related services preparation programs to include AT in the training of new professionals. WATI is developing AT kits that will be made available to professors in order for them to have a continuum of AT available to demonstrate for students throughout the course of a semester. Support materials will be included in the kits. During Years Two and Three, WisTech will help promote the availability of these kits and the need to include AT knowledge and skills in the pre-service training of professionals.

Employment

- Training will be provided to rehabilitation counselors, state and local agencies, adult service program staff and others involved in returning people with disabilities to meaningful employment. The Wisconsin Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) has counselors serving individuals in 11 Workforce Development Areas (WDA) through the One-Stop Job Center system. SVRI will work with WDA DVR management as well as other relevant parties (i.e., Disability Program Navigators) and WisTech partners to coordinate assistive technology trainings focusing on returning to work and success in the workplace.
- Wisconsin's Medicaid Infrastructure Grant (MIG), funded through the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS), includes a project to provide training to professional practitioners to better match consumers with appropriate AT to increase employment of persons with disabilities. This project is coordinating a series of training events for physical and occupational therapists and speech language pathologists, and other rehabilitation professionals to help them to assess consumers AT needs and acquire appropriate AT devices. The DHFS Office of Independence and Employment serves as the organizational home for the MIG and WisTech, facilitating collaboration and avoiding duplication of services.

WisTech is also developing a AT Training and Technical Assistance website and toll-free number in coordination with the MIG and SVRI to provide AT assistance to consumers, providers and practitioners, and employers across the state.

Community Living

- WisTech will work in collaboration with its partners to train professionals who work with consumers in the community. These include: healthcare professionals, adult service agency staff, caseworkers at the counties and the ADRCs, residential and transportation supports, ILC AT specialists, and others. Training will include basic understanding of AT, using AT in the community and home, and sources of funding for AT. The training is developed to include information for a broad array of disabilities and devices. In addition to the core training areas, there will be an emphasis on enhancing independence and full community inclusion through the use of assistive technology.
- WisTech will provide training and explore opportunities to share information with AT vendors. This training is provided to the staff at ILCs, county social services, ADRCs, and vocational rehabilitation. For example, WisTech staff maintains regular

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contact with the Medicaid program and with the Wisconsin Association of Medical Equipment Services (WAMES) to locate durable medical equipment (DME) for special needs consumers. In addition, WAMES provides speakers and equipment demonstrations for Independent Living Center staff and other agencies regarding new technology. Training will include updates and strategies to maximize available funding for DME under Medicaid, Medicare, and through the Veterans Administration.

Technical Assistance

WisTech provides technical assistance to agencies and organizations by request, and through the AT Training and Technical Assistance (AT T&TA) website and toll-free number developed in collaboration with SVRI and the MIG.

Technical Assistance specific to assistive technology will be available through three primary modes.

- As follow-up on training topics and presentations. Training materials will be posted on the WisTech and AT T&TA website which will be linked to the WATI websites, among others.
- The AT T&TA project includes an online forum for consumers, practitioners, vendors and others to share information about assistive technology.
- Evaluation will be conducted with the help of a researcher at SVRI to assess the impact of the AT T&TA website and toll-free number.

Transition

The AT Act requires that WisTech specifically focus on training and technical assistance around transition. This includes transition for students with disabilities who are leaving high school for employment or post-secondary education and transition for those entering or maintaining community living.

During January 2006, WisTech organized a forum at a training event for practitioners that included a panel of individuals experienced in providing transition services. The panel participants included an AT specialist from WATI, an ILC transitions coordinator, a counselor from a Technical Collegedisability office, a DVR staff member and a consumer representative who shared strategies and outlined the steps involved in successfully including AT in transition planning.

In cooperation with SVRI, WisTech collaboratively organized two conferences focused on a combination of K-12 transitions and transition from high school to post-secondary education in November 2005. In February 2006, WisTech staff participated on a transition panel at the Wisconsin State Transition Initiative conference.

Community living transition will be addressed by the involvement of WisTech in activities aimed at improved access to AT for consumers who are moving from nursing

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homes and institutional settings to less restrictive living environments such as their homes, apartments, or assistive living. Wisconsin's governor has proposed an initiative to allow elders and persons with physical disabilities the opportunity to relocate from nursing homes. WisTech staff and contract agencies will provide input regarding AT access and acquisition as part of the planning and implementation of this relocation effort. With the participation of the Medicaid Community Options Program Waiver, this initiative will give consumers the option of living in a more independent setting if their needs can be met with community supports including the use of assistive technology.

WisTech will sponsor a workshop at the statewide Long-term Care conference in October 2006 to provide information on AT and home modifications. The workshop will include presentations from ILC staff from around the state to share and discuss their experiences in assisting consumers relocate from nursing homes to the community or to other less restrictive settings.

In addition, DHFS Developmental Disability (DD) Services section operates a Medicaid Community Integration Waiver Program to assist in the transition of individuals from Wisconsin's DD Centers to their homes or community residential settings. WisTech provides technical assistance and training about AT to waiver care managers.

This technical assistance and training will include consultation to improve access to funding for DME under Medicaid and Medicare. WisTech staff will continue to participate in the annual Bureau of Quality Assurance conference for residential health care providers by having an informational booth for participants. WisTech also provides training at the annual conference for long-term support program care managers, nurses, and social workers. Features of the three year AT Plan will be showcased to promote the utilization of contract agencies involved in device reutilization, device demonstration and device loans. Consumers and care managers will also be encouraged to attend and participate at device demonstration sites and at demonstration events as outlined in Attachment 5 of this Plan. In this way, consumers who are transitioning from nursing homes and state residential facilities will be provided with access to information and assistive technology to assist in their adjustment to the community.

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8.2 Public Awareness Activities – Describe how the State will provide information to targeted individuals and entities relating to the availability, benefits, appropriateness, and costs of assistive technology devices and assistive technology services as described in section 4(e)(3)(B)(ii) of the AT Act.

Over the next three years, WisTech will use a multifaceted approach (mailings, internet, toll-free number, exhibits, presentations, and trainings) to increase awareness about the benefits of assistive technology devices and services, the types of AT devices and services available, funding for AT devices and services, and policies related to AT. WisTech will provide the following public awareness activities:

During Years Two and Three, WisTech will actively seek out participation as a conference and booth presenter at statewide organizations events (e.g., conferences, fairs) that serve WisTech's targeted groups. These events include, but are not limited to:

- for people with developmental disabilities, the Circles of Life, Arc-Wisconsin Disability Association, and the Annual Developmental Disabilities Network conferences.
- for people who are blind or visually impaired, the Progress in Sight, a cooperative effort between the Wisconsin Council of the Blind and the University of Wisconsin addressing macular degeneration.
- for the rehabilitation and education community, the Statewide Rehabilitation and Transition Conference.
- for workforce development partners, the Statewide Workforce Development Conference. For employers, the Wisconsin State Conference of the Society of Human Resource Management (SHRM).
- for youth, the Youth Leadership Conference, aimed at transition-age youth with disabilities and hosted by the University of Wisconsin-Whitewater.
- for elders, the Coalition of Wisconsin Aging Groups annual convention that draws hundreds of older consumers to address aging issues.
- for Native Americans, the Assistive Technology and Resource fairs co-sponsored by the Paralyzed Veterans' Administration and North Country Independent Living Center.

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Information and Referral

Several entities provide information and referral through relationships or contracts through DHFS.

During Year One and as part of the ongoing efforts of the program, WisTech was integrated into the information and referral services of the following organizations and agencies:

- Independent living centers (ILCs) work with consumers regarding assistive technology issues as equipment demonstration and loan centers and as part of the four core services for which ILCs receive state and federal funding.
- The Aging and Disability Resource Centers (ADRC), which expanded to 13 counties in 2006, and which will expand to include an additional nine counties in 2007, have certified information and assistance staff who provide services to anyone in the county.
- WisTech will work to improve coordination and the sharing of AT information with agencies that work with specific consumer groups. For example, WisTech makes regular presentations at conferences for developmental disabilities, seniors and aging groups, school transition programs, providers for children with disabilities, tribal agencies, county social service agencies, Vocational Rehabilitation, and Aging and Disability Resource Centers (ADRCs).

It is anticipated that these collaborations will continue. In addition, there will be contacts and collaborations with professional therapy associations including occupational therapists, physical therapists, speech language pathologists, rehabilitation counselors, and others professionals frequently in contact with consumers in need of AT services.

During Years Two and Three, the Department will reach out to organizations, providers, contractors and partners statewide to be sure WisTech is integrated with existing information and referral services as well as encouraging partners to refer between each other to strengthen the network of services available statewide.

- WisTech's toll-free phone number, website and program information will be provided to statewide information and referral services such as First Call for Help and Wisconsin First Step.
- WisTech will provide information to clinics, therapists, discharge planners and other health care professionals so that consumers will benefit from the statewide network of specialty AT services. For example, WisTech can provide written and web-based information so staff in a clinic understand the benefits of referring a hard of hearing individual to an audiologist to select the most appropriate hearing aid.

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- The WisTech website, and the upcoming AT T&TA website and toll-free number, features articles, links and live technical assistance to assist agencies and consumers in locating AT resources and links, including WATI, CASC-CDP, SVRI and other partners. The website also provides an opportunity for individuals to learn about WisLoan, the state alternative financing program.
- WisTech will reach out to grassroots organizations such as community centers and churches to share program information so consumers receive appropriate referrals for their assistive technology needs.
- WisTech will provide information to the headquarters and regional offices of the statewide Children with Special Healthcare Needs information and referral network.

WisTech will address the AT needs of consumers to receive regionally appropriate information by providing program information to existing information and referral organizations. Engaging regional providers addresses the overall goal of WisTech to provide no wrong point of entry into the program.

8.3 Coordination and Collaboration – Describe how the State will coordinate activities among public and private entities that are responsible for policies, procedures, or funding for the provision of assistive technology devices and assistive technology services to individuals with disabilities, service providers, and others to improve access to assistive technology devices and assistive technology services as described in section 4(e)(3)(B)(iii) of the AT Act.

Because coordination and collaboration with public and private entities often is based on emerging, new, or changing policies and procedures, it is difficult to anticipate all of the coordination and collaboration activities that WisTech will undertake over the next two years. In the past, coordination and collaboration involved the proposal of new or changes to current AT policies, providing input on proposed AT policies, and analysis of the impact of current AT policies. WisTech does this through participation on task forces sponsored by state agencies, by attending conferences and technology fairs in cooperation with vocational rehabilitation, ILCs, state organizations of occupational therapists, physical therapists, speech language pathologists and audiologists, and other professional and disability networks throughout the state.

For example:

- Assistive Technology K-12 to Post-Secondary Workgroup

This group is comprised of representatives from the WI Department of Public Instruction, the Wisconsin Assistive Technology Initiative, the University of Wisconsin System, the Wisconsin Technical College System, WisTech and the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation. The purpose of the group is to address AT needs of students at all levels of the educational system including: (1) the

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inclusion of AT in developing the Individualized Educational Plan (IEP), (2) preparation of students, education staff, and parents throughout the educational process (K-12) on assistive technology, (3) access to assistive technology, training on AT, maintenance and keeping technology up-to-date, (4) requirements under 504 or ADA throughout the educational process relative to assistive technology, and (4) ensuring that students have continued AT access for post-secondary education and/or employment.

This Workgroup is part of the planning of a three-day training and demonstration event scheduled for March 2007. The intention of the Workgroup is provide ongoing statewide educational, rehabilitation, and vocational guidance to enable students with disabilities to optimize the use of AT.

- Long-term Care Task Force

This group has been assembled to carry out the Governor's initiative to provide the opportunity for elders and persons with disabilities to move from nursing homes or state facilities for developmental disabilities to less restrictive community settings. Participants include county social service staff, state Medicaid Waiver staff, state Developmental Disability Services section staff, ILCs, WisTech, and representatives of the nursing home and assisted living associations. WisTech is involved to provide consultation and technical assistance regarding funding for DME under Medicaid and Medicare and ensure that consumers have access to other AT devices to promote community living through device loan, device reutilization, and the AFP (WisLoan) programs.

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Attachment 9: Involvement of Public and Private Entities

9.1 Nature and Extent of Resources – Describe the nature and extent of resources that will be committed by public and private collaborators to assist in accomplishing identified goals.

The majority of the partnerships that WisTech will engage in throughout the State Plan are with entities that will not receive funding from WisTech, but will receive benefits such as increased public awareness and knowledge of their programs and services through WisTech's public awareness activities and through the network of referrals between device demonstration, reutilization and loan centers. This includes planned partnerships with the Wisconsin Assistive Technology Initiative (WATI), the Telecommunications Equipment Purchase Plan (TEPP), and the Communications Aids and Services Clinic-Communication Development Program (CASC-CDP), the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR), AgrAbility, ADRCs, the university and technical college student disability centers, AT vendors, and others.

Each partner will provide staff time involved in partnership development, and will be invited to participate in the committees of the AT Council. Staff from partner and contract organizations will lend their expertise in workgroups during the development of the definitions of the loan and demonstration centers, the development of lending criteria, the organization of the demonstration events, and review and feedback regarding the effectiveness of the program.

9.2 Mechanisms to Ensure Coordination - Describe the mechanisms established to ensure coordination of activities and collaboration between the implementing entity, if any, and the State.

Not applicable; Wisconsin does not have an implementing entity.

9.3 Involvement of State Advisory Council - Describe the nature and extent of the involvement of the State Advisory Council in the planning, implementation, and evaluation of the activities carried out through the grant, including setting the measurable goals required in section 4(d)(3).

The AT Advisory Council met via telephone prior to the submission of the amendment to the State Plan to review the proposed amendments. The Council has quarterly meetings planned at which it will review the progress of the program and then provide advisory assistance with ongoing operation, potential partners, and evaluation of the program.

The Council reviewed the amendments to the State Plan for AT, including the goals described in Attachment 4, via conference call. Feedback was incorporated into the State Plan.

The following items capsule the philosophy of Council:

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- The availability of consumer-focused education about AT and the availability of information through alternative formats, including paper copies and contacting the program via telephone
- The value of teaching vendors about consumer needs for equipment try-outs and maintenance/repair of equipment
- The value of both experienced staff at loan centers and the needs of consumers to interact with licensed personnel
- Concern that assessments need to be more specific to address each individual's disability and multiple disabilities
- Assessments that are driven less by equipment that is available from vendors but rather incorporates the best fit for the consumer – including modifications to standard equipment
- Value of consumers as partners in finding AT solutions
- Improved competency of staff working with consumers across the program.

Additional details regarding the role of the Council in the ongoing implementation of the State Plan and in assistive technology activities across the state is described in Attachment 3.

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Attachment 10: State Support

10.1 State Support for State-level Activities – If applicable, describe how the State will support with State funds any State-level activities described in section 4(e)(2).

The State of Wisconsin is providing \$25,000 in state general purpose revenue funds for the WisTech program. WisTech intends to use these funds to make capital purchases of equipment, pay for dues in the national Association of Tech Act Projects, fund the AT Advisory Council, contribute to costs associated with collaborative efforts, and other business deemed appropriate.

Any unused state funds not used will be allocated in small grants to partners that can provide equal match to assist them in fulfilling their role as partners in the State-level activities. This funding is guaranteed for Years One and Two.

In addition, in-kind management and administrative support will be provided to the following extent, at a minimum:

- Dan Johnson, .05 FTE
Mr. Johnson is the DHFS Coordinator of Physical Disabilities programs.
- John Reiser, .10 FTE
Mr. Reiser is the Director of the Office of Independence and Employment, the organizational home for WisTech and WisLoan.
- Donna McDowell, .05 FTE
Ms. McDowell is the Director of the Bureau of Aging and Disability Resources and provides oversight and administration of the State's aging unit and its statutorily mandated programs for elders, as well as programs that serve people with visual and auditory disabilities, and the Aging and Disability Resource Centers.
- Sinikka Santala, .025 FTE
Ms. Santala is the Administrator of the Division of Disability and Elder Services, the organizational home of the DHFS programs responsible for long-term care services in the state.
- Partnerships with other state offices who address AT needs of consumers, including the Bureau of Long-Term Support, Office for the Blind and Visually Impaired, Office for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing, Medicaid, the Minority Health Program and Birth to 3.

10.2 State Support for State Leadership Activities - If applicable, describe how the State will support with State funds any State Leadership activities described in section 4(e)(3), if applicable.

State: Wisconsin

The state leadership activities carried out as described in this application will be successful in-part because of the existing infrastructure developed and implemented with the assistance of other state and federal funding sources. These include:

- Under funding provided to the state through the Medicaid Infrastructure Grant (MIG), funded by the federal Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS), Wisconsin is providing training around assistive technology for occupational and physical therapists. Many therapists noted a lack of knowledge and training opportunities to learn about assistive technology and how it can be applied in community and work settings. As mentioned, MIG is administered through the same organizational units as WisTech, ensuring coordination and integration of effort and avoidance of duplication.

MIG funding also provides funding for the following AT-related activities:

- Wisconsin is conducting a series of AT Symposiums to explore developments and advances in assistive technology, especially related to employment of people with disabilities.
- The development of a AT Training and Technical Assistance website and toll-free phone number, maintained by SVRI.
- Free training statewide to practitioners and consumers around technology for people who are blind and/or print-impaired, conducted in collaboration with the Northcentral Technical College.
- Ongoing trainings to practitioners around disability-specific AT and its impact on community living and employment.

Through Wisconsin's Pathways to Independence project, another program administered through the same Office as WisTech and funded through state general purpose revenue dollars, knowledge and awareness around employment and accommodation of people with disabilities in the workplace was dramatically increased. WisTech will work with the Pathways project to share their consumer, vendor and employer database to achieve goals related to outreach and public awareness, and to incorporate assistive technology goals into the larger employment goals pursued through Pathways.

State: _____ Wisconsin _____

Attachment 11: Allocation and Utilization of Funds

11.1 Tracking Expenditures – Describe planned procedures for tracking expenditures for activities described in sections 4(e)(2) and (3).

The Wisconsin Department of Health and Family Services uses the Community Aids Reporting System (CARS) to track expenditures. CARS uses different line appropriations to track expenditures. Each contract administered to provide services for WisTech will track expenditures according to the type of activity that the contract agency is providing. For example, contracts to agencies providing services as a Device Loan contractor, will be tracked as Device Loan activities. Contract agencies providing a variety of services will report their expenditures on different CARS lines to insure that each activity is tracked appropriately. WisTech staff time spent on a variety of State Level and State Leadership activities will be tracked according to activity based on a percentage of time spent on each activity.

At any time, the WisTech director can request a summary report of CARS expenditures for staff and contractor expenditures. The director will monitor expenditures on a quarterly basis.

11.2 Proposed Budget Allocations – Attach a budget containing proposed allocations for activities described in sections 4(e)(2) and (3).

The following are proposed budget allocations for State Leadership and State Level Activities for Year Two of the program. These numbers will serve as an estimate only for Year Three of this State Plan.

Proposed Allocation	Distribution	Total Award Amount
State Level	61.71%	\$232,000
State Leadership	33.98%	\$127,756
<i>Leadership Activities</i>	<i>95% of 33.98%</i>	<i>\$121,368</i>
<i>Transition Activities</i>	<i>5% of 33.98%</i>	<i>\$6,388</i>
Indirect Costs	4.3%	\$16,165
Total		\$375,921

Within the above budget, DHFS will apportion funds for specific activities in the following manner. These number reflect a proposal only, and will serve as an estimate only for Year Three of this State Plan.

State Level Activities

State Financing Activities	\$0
Device Reutilization	\$35,000
Device Loan Centers	\$184,000
Device Demonstration	\$13,000
	\$232,000

State: _____ Wisconsin _____

State Leadership Activities

Training and Technical Assistance	\$48,167
Transition	\$6,388
Public Awareness Activities	\$36,600
Coordination and Collaboration	\$36,600
	\$127,756